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June 26, 1998

Cal-Fed Bay-Delta Program
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Re: Comments on draft programmatic EIS/EIR

Agriculture in California is the largest minority employer in America, many who have homes and jobs on farms near rivers. Your vision of set-back levees and land retirement would severely cripple San Joaquin County's economy. In setting back levees and retiring productive ag land you will be throwing people out of their homes and jobs. It is wrong to take our livelihoods we have worked so hard for, to send more water hundreds of miles South to pad developers pockets in Los Angeles. I don't believe that in a great country like ours things were intended to be this way. Setting back levees means moving homes, shops, barns, packing facilities, equipment, irrigation systems, pumps, ditches, livestock and endless other operations we use to make our living on our land that we pay for. How will you accomplish all of these things? How will you help the people whose jobs you take? Do you feel that since many jobs affected are minority employment it won't matter? Or is it more important that developers in Los Angeles get rich than minority farm workers keep jobs?

We must keep in mind we are a Republic and not a Communist Region. We must respect people's property. What will happen to property owners who do not wish to retire property or have set back levees on their property? How will property be acquired? Will it be through eminent domain where the property owner has no say? How will we be reimbursed for our water? Not only is our land worth money but also our water you want so bad. You sell water for \$700.00 an acre ft., will we be paid that figure for our water too? Will you pay us for the millions we've spent maintaining levees (the plumbing of your water system.)? What price is land and business's worth to you? Will you pay people you put out of business for all they would have made until they retired? We have worked too long and hard to build a business to have someone come and take it away.

Many problems associated with rivers are blamed on agriculture, however, before water was exported south there were many less restrictions, many more far worse chemicals used, and many more fish and wildlife in and around the rivers. The single most culprit of the decline of fish and aquatic life has been the export of Northern California's water South. This should be explained to the people of this state without any smoke and mirrors. I also would like an explanation for this. You single handedly have ruined the rivers by exporting too much water and it is time to quit blaming everyone else, and blame yourselves. Why are the canals that export water run at one-half capacity during peak

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winter flows, then full to the brim during summer months when water is scarce and the rivers need it most? Why are there not more storage facilities down South that could be filled during peak runoff in winter? What timeframe will these be built in and how much capacity will they hold? Why during drought years are we at the source of the water forced to conserve water and people in Los Angeles are not forced to conserve any? All through the history of California we have seen and read about Metropolitan Water Districts water grabs. We will not be the next victims. Los Angeles must learn how to become water self-sufficient without ruining anything or anyone else. Why have desaltification plants not been built in Los Angeles? We have so many environmental restrictions to keep wildlife and fish healthy. Why has Los Angeles been exempt from these, and if they're not then why have they not restored the Pavens Valley to its original state? Why is there such a push for us, who already have so much habitat for wildlife, to provide more, when Los Angeles has, is and will continued to destroy habitat in and around themselves. Lets not single out the Delta to be restored at the sole expense of agriculture. Lets also force Los Angeles to restore the habitat they've wiped off the face of the earth such as Pavens Valley. Please explain why our habitat needs to be restored while Los Angeles does not. Sounds illegal and discriminatory to me. If habitat was the issue here it would apply to everyone not just Northern California. No, indeed the issue here is more cheap water for Metro Water District, its time to stop lying and just be honest about it.

If restoring the Delta is so important why are development such as Gold Rush City being allowed in the Delta?

We have the safest, cheapest food supply in the world. Why would you jeopardize that? Food is the one basic resource no one can do without. We cannot become dependent on foreign countries for our food supply. In some foreign countries human raw sewage is used to irrigate crops that are sold here. Let that not be the only choice people have to eat.

Also, please explain why you are going to retire land at the source of the water, but not retire land that you pump water for hundreds of miles? Wouldn't it make more sense to retire this land you are having to pump to, and not have to pump the water in the first place?

Sincerely,

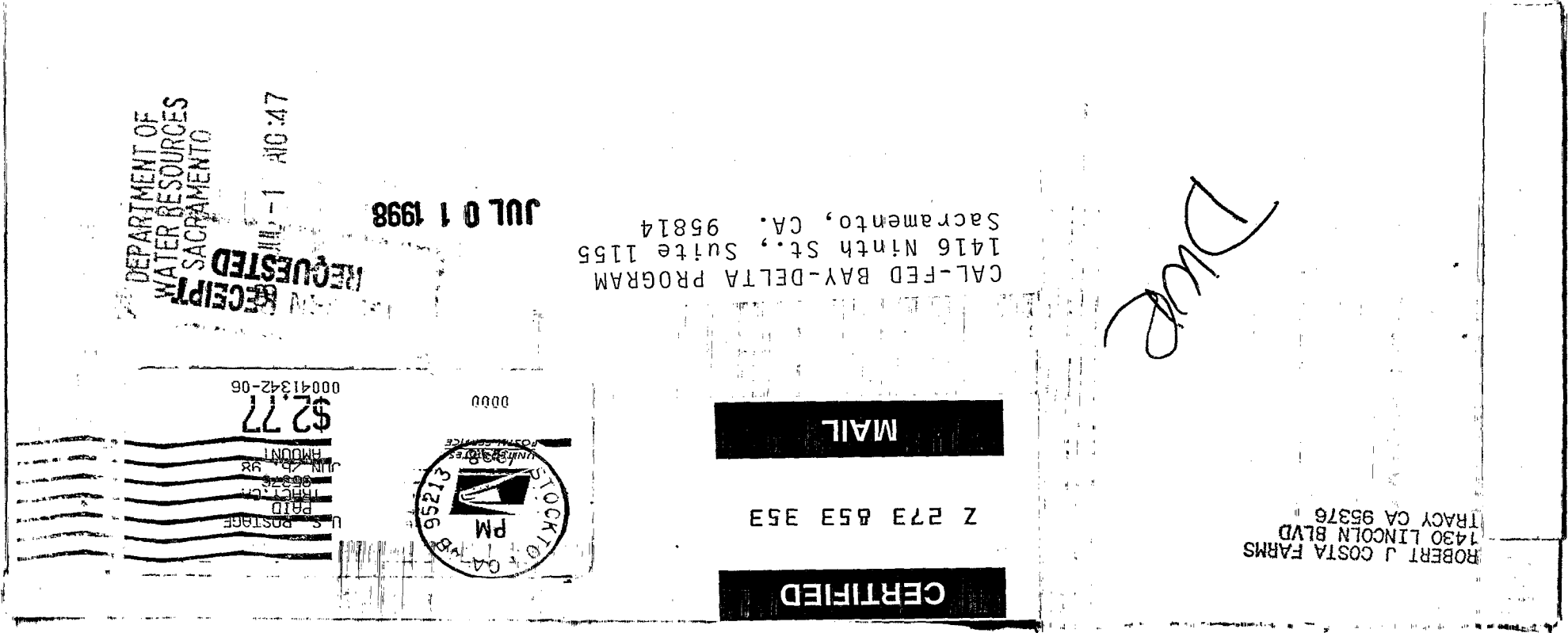
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